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Security Council

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Report of the Security Council mission to Mali, 1-3 February 2014

I. Introduction

1. In a letter dated 13 January 2014, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the members of the Council had decided to send a mission to Mali on 31 January 2014. France and Chad co-led the mission, which included:

Argentina	Marcos Stancanelli, Second Secretary
Australia	Gary Francis Quinlan, Permanent Representative
Chad	Banté Mangaral, Deputy Permanent Representative, mission co-leader
Chile	Ignacio Llanos, Political Coordinator
China	Shen Bo, Political Coordinator
France	Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative, mission co-leader, assisted by Emmanuel Suquet, France mission expert
Jordan	Mahmoud Hmoud, Deputy Permanent Representative
Lithuania	Raimonda Murmokaitė, Permanent Representative
Luxembourg	Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative
Nigeria	Usman Sarki, Deputy Permanent Representative
Republic of Korea	Oh Joon, Permanent Representative
Russian Federation	Petr Iliichev, Deputy Permanent Representative
Rwanda	Eugène-Richard Gasana, Permanent Representative

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United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Peter Wilson, Deputy Permanent Representative
United States of America	Samantha Power, Permanent Representative

2. The Security Council mission was the first Council visit to Mali. Its primary purpose, in line with the statement by the President of the Security Council dated 23 January 2014, was to reiterate the Council's urgent call for the launch of an inclusive and credible negotiation process after a halt of several months in the convening of the two implementation bodies established pursuant to the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement of 18 June 2013 — the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and the Mixed Technical Commission on Security. The mission further aimed at assessing progress in the implementation of resolution 2100 (2013), notably the stabilization of key population centres in the north of Mali, the re-establishment of State authority, the rebuilding of the security sector and the protection of human rights, as well as the level of deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The mission liaised with the full complement of Malian civil society and government representatives, as well as the northern armed groups and the international community.

II. Key issues

Status of the political process

3. The armed groups signatory to the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement, the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) and the Haut conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad (HCUA), called for the full implementation of the agreement. They reiterated their willingness to canton their combatants and disarm them upon the signature of a comprehensive peace accord, as provided by article 6 of the agreement. The groups said that they welcome the participation of all regional countries in the inclusive dialogue and, with regard to Algeria's current mediation initiative, proposed that Algeria join the existing dialogue mechanisms. MNLA and HCUA called for the negotiations to be held in a neutral location.

4. The adherent groups to the preliminary agreement, the Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad and the Coordination des mouvements et forces patriotiques de résistance, expressed frustration that they were not included in the meetings of the Mixed Technical Commission on Security and had not been assigned any cantonment site. The groups insisted on the multi-ethnic character of northern Mali, stressing that they represented sizeable communities that ought to be included in any comprehensive negotiation process. The mission reassured the adherent groups of the full support of MINUSMA for an inclusive peace process. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali reminded them that it was article 8 of the preliminary agreement that had set the membership of the Commission, and explained that the expansion of the Commission required agreement among its current members. He recalled that the Commission had not met for some time but pledged to support the adherent groups' request.

5. Civil society, for its part, pressed for the inclusive dialogue process not to be restricted to the armed groups, but to also include the conflict's victims, arguing that

the conflict should not be seen as rewarding the armed elements for the abuses they had committed on the civilian population. Civil society organizations advocated for the inclusive dialogue to be held in Mali so as to facilitate ordinary citizens' participation. The Malian authorities committed themselves to involving civil society in the inclusive dialogue.

6. The President, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, expressed gratitude for all the international support extended to Mali. He recalled his appreciation for the mediation efforts of Burkina Faso, which had led to the signing of the Ouagadougou preliminary agreement and enabled the holding of the presidential elections. He said that he had similarly welcomed Algeria's offer to gather together the northern armed groups in mid-January, although he indicated that, with legitimate institutions now in place in Mali, the Government should take ownership of the reconciliation process and any new agreement should be signed in Mali. The President informed the mission that the Government was developing a national reconciliation road map, whose implementation he hoped the United Nations would support. He stressed that, in his view, the full disarmament of the armed groups should precede the comprehensive negotiation process.

7. The Prime Minister, Oumar Tatam Ly, briefed the mission on the preparatory steps the Government envisaged prior to the launch of the comprehensive peace talks. The Government and MINUSMA had already held preliminary consultations on cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. MINUSMA had planned three workshops pertaining to the lessons learned from previous peace agreements, cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as the return of State administration and resumption of public services in the north of Mali during the week following the mission. The Government further intended to hold consultations with civil society, starting with women's organizations. The Prime Minister pointed out that these four events were scheduled in February and that, provided that Algeria would in parallel conclude the exploratory talks, the inclusive dialogue could begin shortly. The Government subsequently made available to the mission a concept note outlining its road map for conflict resolution.

8. The international members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee stressed the urgency of launching the inclusive dialogue. There was consensus among those members that the current lapse in the implementation of the preliminary agreement heightened the risk of further divisions within and among armed groups and the danger that some may take up arms again. They also pointed to the danger that the delay in the launching of the comprehensive peace process could be exploited by potential spoilers. The African Union posited that there was no alternative to reconciliation. The European Union called for the implementation of the preliminary agreement without preconditions, starting with the inclusive dialogue, cantonment and the re-establishment of State authority and services in northern Mali. Algeria expressed support for the Government of Mali and concurred that the disarmament of the armed groups would ensue in the context of the comprehensive peace agreement. Algeria further indicated that the exploratory discussions under way in Algiers were meant to pave the way for an inclusive dialogue to be held in Mali. The Economic Community of West African States underlined the positive cooperation between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the regional organizations. The international partners of Mali reaffirmed their availability to support an intra-Malian process through a *cadre de concertation*.

9. All Malian stakeholders reaffirmed their willingness to take part in an inclusive dialogue with a view to reaching a comprehensive and sustainable settlement to the recurring crisis. The mission held that only the Malians could negotiate a sustainable settlement to the country's recurring crisis, and urged the parties to engage without preconditions in inclusive talks immediately. Council members recalled the preliminary agreement, reaffirming that cantonment would be the first step in the disarmament process and that full disarmament would take place with the signature of a comprehensive peace agreement. The mission advocated for the negotiations to start as soon as possible within a pre-established timetable.

Protection of human rights and support to national justice

10. Civil society organizations testified to a marked improvement in the human rights situation in southern Mali, following the re-establishment of the constitutional order. They also attested to some progress in the human rights situation in northern Mali but questioned why known human rights abusers, notably perpetrators of sexual violence, had not been prosecuted to date. The liberation of conflict-related prisoners and the lifting of the arrest warrants against former Members of Parliament, who were also members of the armed groups, in accordance with the preliminary agreement, were denounced by civil society as infringement by the executive power on judicial independence. Some representatives of civil society and armed groups called for the establishment of an international commission of inquiry, as provided for by the preliminary agreement.

11. The Minister of Justice briefed the mission on ongoing efforts to guarantee the victims access to justice, including cooperation between the Ministry and civil society organizations to identify and support survivors of sexual violence as well as between the Ministry and MINUSMA to facilitate the return of judicial authorities to northern Mali.

12. The Government underlined that it had renamed the former Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission and reformed it into the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, which would soon begin its work. The Minister for National Reconciliation pledged to include civil society in the work of the Commission, which would be mandated to look into all human rights abuses and violations committed since 1961 so that no pending claims remain unanswered.

Stabilization of key population centres and deployment of MINUSMA

13. Civil society representatives from Timbuktu and Gao reported that MINUSMA was only securing cities while civilians remained at risk in rural areas, which was also an observation echoed by the northern armed groups. The Prime Minister called for the force to be reinforced, while the Minister of Security called on MINUSMA to strengthen its cooperation with the Malian army. The MINUSMA military leadership confirmed that the lack of critical enablers such as helicopters curtailed its capacity to deploy throughout northern Mali. The Force Commander and the Sector West Commander stressed the urgent need for air assets that would enable it to respond in real time to emerging developments.

14. Malian and international interlocutors stressed that the terrorist threat remained, as jihadist groups had retained significant capacity and maintained their objective of regaining control over northern Mali. The northern armed groups stated that they continued to fight against terrorist groups and that this would need to be

taken into account when planning the further cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of their combatants.

15. The mission was told that MINUSMA would have to play a central role in securing the northern population centres over the coming months, as Operation Serval was gradually drawing down and the rebuilding of the Malian security sector remained at an early stage. The Serval and MINUSMA Force Commanders briefed the mission on their respective mandates. The Serval Commander underlined that, except for Serval's mandate to intervene in support of MINUSMA elements under imminent and serious threat as provided by resolution 2100 (2013), the French force would from now on solely implement counter-terrorism activities. This would leave MINUSMA with the lead responsibility for securing the key population centres, especially in northern Mali, and protecting civilians.

16. The Serval Commander assessed that the MINUSMA force had performed well in spite of its limited troops and assets. He stressed the need to deploy the remainder of its authorized capabilities, noted that the force would need to put into practice its robust rules of engagement and advised that it procure unmanned aerial systems to more fully apprehend the terrain in which MINUSMA was mandated to operate.

17. MINUSMA management told the mission that it was simultaneously deploying additional blue helmets and upgrading the equipment inherited from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). Only 5,910 troops out of the 11,200 authorized were on the ground in Mali during the Security Council's visit. While contributors of 90 per cent of the outstanding military requirements had been identified by the United Nations Secretariat, MINUSMA assessed that it would reach full operational capacity only by June. In Mopti, the mission visited a formed police unit and a level II hospital from Togo, which had initially been deployed under AFISMA. The mission was informed that Togo's level II hospital equipment would be upgraded to United Nations standards upon its redeployment to Kidal. The MINUSMA Director of Mission Support informed the mission that contracts had been concluded to erect major joint civil-military bases for MINUSMA personnel in three key locations around the country. The Government had allocated 70 ha plots to enable the construction of those bases by June.

Security sector reform

18. The European Union Training Mission in Mali and Operation Serval gave a positive assessment of the performance of the three Malian army battalions trained in Koulikoro and now operating in the north. Serval and MINUSMA support the training activities of the European Union mission. The curriculum is oriented towards the training of individual battalions and the restructuring of the military. It includes scenario-based, practical training in international humanitarian law and human rights, with theoretical teaching and practical exercises supported by MINUSMA personnel. Serval monitors the performance of the battalions that have completed the training and have been deployed in the north. A few months into their deployment, the Training Mission debriefs the Malian officers and provides additional support as needed. Feedback on the performance of the Malian troops trained by the European Union mission was overall positive, though it was noted that the population in the north of Mali distrusts the Malian military. It was further noted that the Minister of Defence was focused on increasing the size of the Malian military. The European Union mission underlined the importance of focusing on

improving the quality of the troops to ensure more professionalized forces. At the same time, Serval, the European Union mission and MINUSMA recalled that the responsibility for the maintenance of law and order should be entrusted not to the military but to civilian police. The mission was also advised that rebuilding the national army and reforming the security sector was a long-term endeavour, which is likely to go beyond the end of the current mandate (May 2016) of the European Union Training Mission.

Re-establishment of State authority and early recovery

19. The Prime Minister briefed the mission on the Government's plan to gradually redeploy State administration and resume the delivery of public services in the north of Mali. He stated that, in the Timbuktu and Gao regions, administrative staff had returned at the regional and subregional levels but had not yet resumed their functions at the local level owing to latent insecurity. In Kidal, State representatives were confined to the main town. The Prime Minister said that the Government had earmarked CFA 35 billion in its 2013-2014 budget to rehabilitate public infrastructure in the north of Mali. He further informed the mission that the European Union and the World Bank had committed themselves to support the Government's efforts through humanitarian and development programmes aiming at enhancing the living conditions of northern communities. The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator testified to the major improvements accomplished in Gao region over the past six months. He said that 75 per cent of schools and 90 per cent of health centres that operated before the crisis were functioning again, but later noted that only 50 per cent of eligible children even attended school. He noted, however, that food insecurity remained high and there was an urgent need to restore and improve basic services.

III. Observations

20. The Security Council travelled to Mali concerned that the stalled political process, particularly the launch of an inclusive dialogue towards a comprehensive peace settlement to the crisis, may threaten the remarkable progress achieved by the Malian people and authorities over the past year. It was briefed to the effect that, unless the inclusive dialogue provided for by the preliminary agreement starts without delay, the deepening lack of trust between the parties and growing divisions within the northern armed groups risk leading to a radicalization of some elements and closing this unique window of opportunity to find a durable solution to the crisis. The Council's interlocutors consistently highlighted the need for intra-communal as well as inter-communal dialogue, and the full involvement of civil society.

21. After all stakeholders reassured the mission of their commitment to the reconciliation process, Council members urged the parties to engage as soon as possible in an inclusive dialogue, without preconditions but within a pre-defined timetable. They recommended that cantonment continue as part of the negotiation process paving the way to a comprehensive agreement and full disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the armed groups. The Security Council reiterated its support to the efforts of all bilateral and multilateral partners aiming at supporting the Malians in their quest for a sustainable solution to the recurring crisis. It welcomed the Government road map, including the workshops organized

by MINUSMA and the preparatory activities planned by the Government with civil society. The Council reaffirmed its readiness to support the efforts of the Malian parties through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA.

22. Several Malian stakeholders called for MINUSMA troops to expand their stabilization efforts beyond the key population centres in the north of Mali, noting the threat posed by terrorist and criminal elements against the civilian population. The mission expressed concern about the delays in the deployment of the force, particularly as the stalled political process heightens tensions and the peacekeeping mission would be called to play an increasingly central role amid Operation Serval's drawdown. The mission took note of the Government's call to expedite the deployment of the force and reinforce the cooperation between the Malian army and the peacekeepers.

23. A number of civil society representatives expressed the view that the crisis in northern Mali did not stem from ethnic tensions but from development and governance issues. They called the Security Council's attention to the underdevelopment of northern Mali and the absence of work opportunities for the youth. The northern armed groups also advocated for enhanced United Nations development activities. President Keïta briefed the mission that he had adopted a zero-tolerance policy on corruption and stressed that national reconciliation was his priority, which the mission welcomed as essential to resolving the crisis. He stated that he hoped to find a durable settlement to the crisis so that he could then turn his attention more fully to combating poverty and overseeing the sustainable development of his country. The mission took note of the convergence of views among all Malian stakeholders on the need to advance national reconciliation and accountability, and reiterated the Security Council's call to address the underlying causes of recurrent crises that have affected Mali.

Annex I

Security Council mission to Mali: terms of reference

1. To welcome the full restoration of democratic governance and constitutional order in Mali, following the successful conduct, with the support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), of peaceful and transparent presidential and legislative elections in 2013; to consult with the newly appointed and elected authorities.

2. To welcome the initial efforts of the Government of Mali to launch a series of national consultative events on the situation in the north of Mali and to encourage further steps towards consolidating stability, advancing national reconciliation, fostering social cohesion and addressing the underlying causes of recurrent crises which have affected Mali; to assess progress on conflict mitigation and prevention activities at the national and local levels, including through local partners, and the national dialogue and reconciliation process, including through the participation of civil society.

3. To reiterate the urgent call of the Security Council for an inclusive and credible negotiation process open to all communities of the north of Mali, with the goal of securing a durable political resolution to the crisis and long-term peace and stability throughout the country, respecting the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Malian State, as called for in the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement of 18 June 2013.

4. To underscore the call of the Security Council for all the signatories of the Preliminary Agreement and those armed groups in the north of Mali that have cut off all ties with terrorist organizations and committed unconditionally to the Agreement to swiftly and fully implement its provisions, including the cantonment of armed groups, the progressive re-establishment of State administration throughout the country and the launching of inclusive and credible peace talks.

5. To reiterate the full support of the Security Council for the facilitation of an inclusive process through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali, in close coordination with the international community, including the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the European Union in accordance with paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2100 (2013), towards the restoration of peace and security throughout the national territory of Mali, in the context of a comprehensive agreement ending the crisis.

6. To reiterate the call of the Security Council for all relevant Malian parties to agree without any delay on active measures to further the cantonment of armed groups as an essential step leading to an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, in the context of a comprehensive peace settlement; to assess how MINUSMA can further support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

7. To reaffirm the support of the Security Council to MINUSMA and to receive a briefing on the implementation of resolution 2100 (2013), in particular the operational deployment of MINUSMA to stabilize key population centres, especially in the no th of Mali, and to support the re-establishment of State authority throughout the country and the promotion of the rule of law and protection of human rights.

8. To reiterate the concern of the Security Council about the volatile security situation and to receive a briefing on the security situation, particularly in the north of Mali, and the threat posed to regional stability by terrorist groups; to get updates on the implementation of the MINUSMA mandate, in support of the Government of Mali, of protecting civilians and stabilizing the key population centres, especially in the north of Mali, and, in this context, deterring threats and taking active steps to prevent the return of armed elements to those areas, and of contributing to the creation of a secure environment for the safe, civilian-led delivery of humanitarian assistance, in accordance with the United Nations guiding principles of emergency humanitarian assistance; to receive updates on the cooperation of all parties with MINUSMA, with a view to ensuring the Mission's safety and security; to receive a briefing on the implementation of the mandate of the French forces to support MINUSMA when under imminent and serious threat.

9. To reiterate the call of the Security Council for maintaining Malian civilian control and oversight of the Malian Defense and Security Forces as a key element of the overall reform of the security sector and, in this regard, to encourage the Government of Mali to continue to make progress and to assess the contribution of MINUSMA and other international donors, including the European Union through the Common European Security and Defence Policy and the European Union Training Mission in Mali.

10. To emphasize the continuing concerns of the Security Council about the protection of civilians, the importance of the fight against impunity and the need to address the issue of sexual violence and strengthen child protection; to advocate respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, to encourage the Government of Mali to ensure that those responsible for serious violations and abuses of human rights are swiftly brought to justice and to continue to cooperate with the International Criminal Court.

11. To emphasize that the perpetrators of sexual violence must be held accountable and to stress the need to ensure the full, equal and effective participation of women at an early stage of the stabilization phase, including in the security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, as well as in the national political dialogue and electoral processes, bearing in mind Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); to further emphasize that perpetrators of violations and abuses against children must be held accountable and to ensure that specific attention is given to the protection of children in security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

12. To underscore the need for the Government of Mali to continue to address the humanitarian challenges, including the food crisis, and to achieve lasting solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons, including by creating conditions conducive to their voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return.

13. To reiterate the call of the Security Council for all relevant United Nations agencies and the international community to strengthen their support for the efforts of the Government to provide assistance to the affected populations, particularly women and children, and to support the provision of basic services to the population, in particular in the north of Mali; to encourage the international community to coordinate actions for addressing the immediate and long-term needs of the population of Mali, including in the context of the high-level international donors conference held in Brussels on 5 February to support the development of

Mali, in consultation with the Government; to reiterate the call of the Council for the international community to address the gap in funding of the consolidated humanitarian appeal.

14. To commend the Government of Mali for its chairmanship, for the coming two years, of the coordination platform, as an outcome of the ministerial meeting on the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, held in Bamako on 5 November 2013; to reiterate the call of the Security Council on States of the Sahel, West Africa and the Maghreb to enhance interregional cooperation in order to develop inclusive and effective strategies to address the transnational challenges in the Sahel region, including to combat terrorist activities and transnational organized crime in the region; to reaffirm the commitment of the Council to addressing the complex security and political situation in the Sahel region, which is interrelated with humanitarian and developmental issues.

Annex II

Security Council mission to Mali: programme of work

1 February 2014

2200	Working dinner hosted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

2 February 2014

Mopti

1030-1100	Meeting with authorities
1115-1215	Meeting with civil society
1225-1310	Visit to MINUSMA camp and briefings
1310-1400	Meeting with United Nations agencies and working lunch

Bamako

1700-1830	Audience with Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, President of the Republic
2000	Dinner hosted by the Government

3 February 2014

0800-0830	Briefing by MINUSMA Force Commander, Police Commissioner and Chief Security Adviser
0900-1000	Meeting with civil society
1015-1045	Meeting with Operation Serval Commander
1100-1130	Meeting with the Head of the European Union Training Mission
1130-1400	Meeting with members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
1500-1630	Meeting with the Government
1730-1815	Meeting with members of the Parliament
1900-2000	Press conference
2000-2100	Dinner
2130-2200	Visit of Serval camp